

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01
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R 210840Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5433
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
CINCPAC HONOLULU
COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA
CINCPACFLT MAKALAPA HI
CINCPACAF HICKAM AFB HI
CDRUSACSG FT SHAFTER HI
AMEMBASSY SEOUL

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MARR, JA
SUBJECT: SONODA ON PRIOR CONSULTATION

REF: CINCPAC 182125Z FEB 78 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY. DURING FEBRUARY 16 DIET DEBATE FONMIN SONODA REPORTEDLY SAID THAT PRIOR CONSULTATION COULD TAKE PLACE EITHER IN PEACE OR WAR THUS APPARENTLY MODIFYING EARLIER GOJ POSITION ON MATTER, AND THAT HE WOULD MAKE THIS CLEAR TO US. IN FOLLOW-UP FEBRUARY 17, SONODA CORRECTED HIMSELF BY NOTING THAT PRIOR CONSULTATION SYSTEM HAD NOT BEEN ESTABLISHED IN TERMS OF WARTIME OR PEACETIME AND FONOFF OFFICIAL INFORMED EMBOFF THERE WAS NO NEED FOR CLARIFICATION. END SUMMARY.

1. FONMIN SONODA WAS QUOTED IN FEBRUARY 17 PRESS AS HAVING TOLD LOWER HOUSE BUDGET COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 16 THAT PRIOR CONSULTATIONS
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WOULD BE POSSIBLE IN BOTH PEACETIME AND IN TIME OF EMERGENCY AND THAT HE WOULD MAKE THIS CLEAR TO US SIDE. STATEMENT WAS IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION BY JSP MEMBER DOI CONCERNING NUCLEAR WEAPONS ABOARD MIDWAY AND WAS ATTEMPT TO PIN DOWN CONTRADICTION IN GOJ POSITION, BY NOTING THAT FORMER DEPUTY VICE MINISTER OKAWARA HAD STATED SEVERAL YEARS AGO THAT PRIOR CONSULTATIONS WOULD NOT BE HELD IN PEACETIME. FOLLOWING IS TRANSCRIPT OF SONODA

STATEMENT PROVIDED BY FONOFF:

"IT WAS NOT WHEN I WAS IN OFFICE, AND AS MR. OIDE SAYS SO, I THINK IT IS AS HE SAYS. I THINK THAT THERE ARE FEW MATTERS WHICH WILL BECOME THE OBJECTS OF PRIOR CONSULTATIONS IN PEACETIME, AT LEAST. HOWEVER, THERE ARE MATTERS OVER WHICH PRIOR CONSULTATIONS SHOULD BE HELD, AS A MATTER OF COURSE, WHETHER IN PEACETIME OR IN TIMES OF EMERGENCY. THERE IS NO DOUBT ABOUT THAT. IN ORDER TO MAKE CERTAIN, I WILL MAKE CLEAR THOSE POINTS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH MY REPLY, TO US SIDE, TOO. AS FOR THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHANGING THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S REPLY, I WILL APOLOGIZE LATER."

2. IN TESTIMONY PRECEDING SONODA'S, FONOFF AMERICAN AFFAIRS BUREAU DIRGEN NAKAJIMA HAD ESSENTIALLY LAID QUESTION TO REST BY NOTING THAT IMPORTANT CHANGES IN DEPLOYMENTS WHICH WOULD BE MATTER OF PRIOR CONSULTATION COULD AS MATTER OF COURSE TAKE PLACE EITHER UNDER PEACETIME OR WARTIME CONDITIONS.

3. FONOFF SECURITY DIVISION CHIEF TAMBA INFORMED EMBOFF FEBRUARY 21 THAT AT FEBRUARY 17 SESSION OF BUDGET COMMITTEE, SONODA CLARIFIED PREVIOUS DAY'S STATEMENT BY SAYING THAT PRIOR CONSULTATION SYSTEM HAD NOT BEEN ESTABLISHED IN TERMS OF WARTIME OR PEACETIME, THUS RESULTING IN NO REAL CHANGE FROM PREVIOUSLY HELD JAPANESE POSITION. (CLARIFICATION WAS NOT CARRIED IN THE PRESS.) TAMBA ALSO WENT ON TO SAY THAT FONOFF SAW NO NEED FOR ANY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CLARIFICATION WITH US AS SONODA HAD SUGGESTED, INASMUCH AS SITUATION WAS CRYSTAL CLEAR AS FAR AS GOJ WAS CONCERNED.
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